1: Bowen-Jones et al. K-5 (1955-1958) 1961
EZ6 Malta EZ6

economic structure due to a British policy which in the past was almost entirely based on her own military needs constitutes an unanswerable case for adequate help to the Islands in their present effort' find alternative sources of employment'. From the factual point of view this last statement needs qualification, while in so far as it is representative in a mild way of an attitude which more violently would throw the whole onus of guaranteeing the future on to Britain it is dangerous. In the first place, as the various studies in this book indicate, Maltese economic dependence on the value placed on the islands by non-Maltese communities, necessarily in the light of their own needs, is of great antiquity. The only way in which Britain could have refrained from increasing this dependence would have been by positively encouraging social and economic stagnation outside a small Garrison pale. This leads to the second point that the indigenous population rapidly seized opportunities to rise above the low level of life possible on local non-locational resources. The development of the present economy is as much due to natural indigenous economic desires as to outside pressure. Thirdly, as noted in the Introduction, recent confusion of attitudes towards political subordination and social welfare as well as to production, has produced a general realisation of the problem, without producing any clear solutions. Indeed the implications of the suggested solutions have been met with natural but rather irrational repugnance. Finally, we may observe that the use of phrases such as 'alternative sources of employment' when what is really meant is 'alternative sources of wealth', must always darken counsel. Once again the need for realistic appraisal of natural resources becomes manifest.

The most up-to-date picture of the Islands' general economy may be derived from the 1958 Departmental reports published late in 1959 and 1960. In December 1958 the total population numbered almost 324,000, that of Malta having increased by 5 per cent. since 1948 in spite of emigration while that of Gozo declined by 0.4 per cent. as a result of emigration. The internal shifts of population that occurred during and after World War II have virtually ceased. The gainfully occupied population totalled 88,710, and less than 5 per cent. of the total male population aged 14-64 were not productively occupied. 25.4 per cent. of male workers were Government employees and paid out of Government revenue. 33.5 per cent. of the employed population worked in or for the Service Departments, deriving their income directly or indirectly from the Imperial Government. Thus, only 42 per cent. of the working population is employed in normal civilian activity and, as already noted, most of this activity is generated by indirect Imperial expenditure. In 1958 the gross national product had increased to £42.4 millions but the visible trade deficit also rose to £25.3 millions.

To conclude this section we turn by way of illustration from the general to the particular, to a brief consideration of two of the facets of Maltese life investigated by our team of research workers.

Her Majesty's Dockyard in Malta, for so long the crux of British interest in the Islands, has recently been transferred to civilian interests amidst a welter of differing reactions. Thanks to the co-operation of the Admiral Superintendent and his staff in March 1957 we have been able to analyse the main characteristics of the Dockyard, and present here a few of the relevant findings. At that time, 12,572 Maltese workers were directly employed in the Dockyard, almost exactly the same number as the total of farmholders, or the total engaged in 'industrial' occupations, i.e. mining, quarrying, manufacturing and construction. In the Dockyard there were four departments, those of the Captain, Construction, Engineering, and Electrical Engineering, which were regarded as 'professional departments'. These employed 50 per cent. of the total Dockyard employees, most of this proportion in skilled trades. In the remaining 11 departments, a considerable number of technicians and craftsmen were also employed as well as upper-grade administrative and financial personnel. The Dockyard thus contained the largest pool of skilled labour in the Islands and provided the most important training ground, because, of the roughly equal numbers in civil 'industrial' employment, a very much larger proportion was unskilled, particularly in the building industry (18).

2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
EZ6 Malta EZ6

There is considerable difference in the social status ascribed to various jobs. Non-manual occupations have the highest status, manual occupations the lowest. The professionals – the priest, doctor, lawyer, chemist or teacher – are at the top; while the farmers are at the bottom. In many respects a government clerical officer is also at the other end of the scale from the farmer. The civil servant has a steady, relatively easy job with a good cash income and comfortable pension at the end. He also has ready access to influential persons in the government. His is a life of security and relative independence. The farmer, on the other hand, has been looked down on for centuries. He represents the traditional life of dependence: dependence upon the weather, the market, the *pitkal*, or middleman, for cash advances, the letter-writer and the patron through whom established authority has to be contacted. Education and wage labour have presented the farmer with a means of escape from that dependence and the exhausting labour in his rocky fields. Where he has had the opportunity, he has been quick to turn his back on the traditional occupation of his forefathers.

Wealth is another determinant of status. This is generally related to occupation. There has always been a considerable difference between the standard of living of the professionals and that of the average countryman. But until the past war, there was relatively little difference in the standard of living of most villagers. True, the more affluent lived in the large houses on the main square, and the poorer people lived in the alleys and streets remote from the square. Most people ate similar food, dressed alike and furnished their houses in the same way. But the increase in the level of wages, which followed the war, has changed that pattern. New houses, cars, fridges and transistor radios have become a tangible index of success and status. People are now being graded according to the number of these symbols they own.

Education, occupation and wealth are thus the chief criteria by which social position is differentiated. A person who has all these attributes has high status. But a person with high status is not necessarily a leader; for he may not possess the innate qualities required of a successful leader – courage, responsibility and willingness to work. Where a person has both high status and possesses these qualities – as well as ambition – he will undoubtedly

178 to a limited extent in the life and work of the average
436 farmer, and barter as a medium of exchange had a far greater
437 importance than in recent decades. Family labour within
465 the home went unpaid, but even where wages were paid they were very small indeed, both relatively and absolutely when compared with modern amounts (Section 2). Examples, for comparative purposes, are given by the 1836 Royal Commissioners (B/184), Midge (B/516) and Price (B/556), but even as late as 1911 a day's wages in farm-work might
178 have been something of the order of 1s 3d (B/186). From
454 this same report however, it is learnt that the farming community had by that date become investment conscious and had passed through a sequence of stages:

(a) hoarding "their small capitals" (B/186-12473),
(b) investing in jewellery,
(c) saving with the aim of buying a house,
(d) depositing in savings banks towards this aim,
(e) "Now they want bigger interest than the banks will give them and they are investing in foreign bonds" (B/186-12475).

178 The changed place of money in Maltese rural society
465 today is exemplified by the field labourer of fifty years
[461] ago who received 1s 3d for a dawn-to-dusk working day where his grandson now expects 25/- or 30/- for a limited eight hour day, if he can be persuaded to indulge in field work at all. The developments observed by the 1911 Commissioners were by no means general among the rural population at that time. They were in fact merely the
178 first limited signs of what was to come. However, between
433 1911 and 1939 the Maltese farmer moved steadily towards
722 the commercialism of today. The Second World War brought
465 siege conditions of shortage which put the food producer in Malta in a more commanding position than ever before. He could expect very high guaranteed prices for his produce - or even higher ones on the black market. Farmers became used to the idea of big financial returns for their labour.
[454] Some were able to effect substantial savings under distorted war-time market conditions, but more widespread still was the feeling, which carried on after 1945, that farming in Malta ought still to produce, in competitive peace-time, the profits of war time shortage.

178 The major underlying socio-economic trend has been
611 the great expansion in the range of demands of the countryman. The traditional peasant subsistence farmer was content to live off his own farm as suggested above but the change to 'commercialism' in his farming along with his social emancipation has widened the sphere of considered needs. Diet has become more varied and now includes a variety of food items not produced locally: clothing

178 standards demanded have risen: and luxuries, once almost
511 unheard of, are now becoming part of the expected pattern of the life of the countryman (Section 2). For most of these new needs the farmer has required money. Hence progress, to him, has become synonomous with the acquisition
178 of more money. Branches of banks have appeared in some
511 villages in both islands since 1945 and the countryman is
454 coming to accept this means of storing his accumulated
[453] wealth. The concern for bigger interest, first noted by the 1911 Commissioners, is replacing the traditional mere accumulation of wealth whether in money or in jewellery and other valuables.

178 There is still, however, a very strong element of
181 accumulation rather than investment in the finances of the
454 farmer. This is particularly the case with the older
511 generation who, as always, cling to the ways of the past because their lack of formal education makes them, apparently, unable to comprehend or adapt themselves to the workings of the present. Thus it is held that, while the younger generation have sought to urbanize themselves socially and economically with the money which now comes their way, many of the older generation, that is to say those who are tending to stay in farming today, have taken the 'new' money but have not changed their way of life or living standards to anything like the same extent. Thus dress, for example, is no sure indication of a farmer's wealth in terms of money and one hears of bare-foot, shabbily clothed countrymen with savings of £1000 or more. In traditional Maltese village society the uniformity which was the keynote (Section 1) encouraged the farmer to appear like his neighbour lest he be accused of deviationary tendencies: this feeling is often revealed today in the reluctance of the farmer to be the first to try a new method or crop in his fields for fear of becoming a laughing-stock.

Although the older generation do not strive to demonstrate their wealth in dress, habits, a new house, etc., and do not share the anxiety of the younger villager that he should look like a townsman and move to a 'good' - i.e. non-rural - district, their saving is not completely without aim. To resolve this point fully it would be necessary to consider the whole complex of traditional Maltese village society but for the present discussion some major features only will be outlined.

178 Dowry is one feature of traditional Maltese society
583 which is currently assuming different proportions to those
183 earlier held. It was regarded in the past as essential

178 (the guaranteed price system for milk sold to the M.M.U.)
154 has had a similar effect. It has encouraged the farmer to
[234] turn to milk production and to increase his herd to the maximum (Section 2).

178 Briefly therefore, the position is that the farmer in
511 Malta and Gozo is now faced with a variety of factors
434 tending to make him money conscious to a degree unknown to his grandfather - who spent the 6d per year already mentioned. These factors basically underly the complex of socio-economic changes which have brought and are bringing improved living standards, "emancipation" and a greater range of demands:

(a) In diet, clothing, recreation and 'luxury' fields the farmer is demanding more than before, and this means money.

(b) The traditional pre-occupation with saving has been diverted towards the saving and investment of money rather than the accumulation of kind. Dowry is one example.

(c) The raised circumstances of the farmer have made him anxious to own his farm, and especially his house and (with the recent emphasis here) his animals.

(d) Anxious to get the most out of his holding within the present commercial system he is keen to develop his farm by acquiring machinery (with possible help from a Government loan) or by making some capital [464] improvement. Suffering from shortage of labour, he wants to be able to pay hired farm labour the high wages demanded. His own children work away from the home farm.

[722] (e) The artificially distorted market conditions in siege and war-torn Malta between 1939 and 1945 put the farmer in a commanding financial position, which he continues to regard nostalgically as a Golden Age of Maltese farming. He has never fully been reconciled to his now changed position.

DEBT

173
434 Thus, where the peasant farmer of a century ago saw in
[471] his farm the means of providing for the various needs of the family, the modern farmer in Malta regards his holding, his animals, and equipment, as the means whereby he can make the money which he needs to buy more new items, to expand
[184] his property and to build up his capital reserves. This is the picture as it would be ideally and as it is for a very small section of the farming community: one of the major problems of Maltese farming today is that it is by no means the position among the great bulk of the rural and farming
178 population of the Islands. If, having observed the present
426 position of money and the demands upon which it is based,
434 one turns to a more detailed examination of the financial status of the Maltese farmer the true nature of the problem emerges. Far from acquiring the money which he expects,

178 his income from milk sold and expenses on fodder during
234 nine months of 1957 (Case V, Summary) illustrates the
434 progress of this debt. He looks back nostalgically to
426 the days when his father sold milk from door to door in
[654] the Urban area and complains bitterly of his present poverty. Incongruously, however, he insists that he fully realizes that without the present Government guarantee (through the M.M.U.) he could not operate at all. He probably does realize this.

(b) Another case of operation within permanent debt is provided by two cows-milk producers who work together as a unit (Case IX) with three dozen head of cattle and a total area held of about 100 tmien used primarily for the production of fodder for the herd. They claim that the debt factor makes it impossible for them to organize their farm and herd as they would wish. For example, while they fully realize the profit to be gained by rearing calves and selling fully grown animals, they are in fact forced to sell even female calves (which they would otherwise keep) in order to pay instalments towards the cost of cows or to pay off part of the debt outstanding to the fodder merchants. This debt position makes them reluctant to take on any further loan commitments; nevertheless the Government loan offers at only 1% are definitely attractive, as a means whereby they would be able to increase the number in their herd and also mechanize their field-work without making their debt
178 position appreciably worse. Behind all this it is clear
234 that they are basing all their hopes on the guaranteed milk
434 price offered by the M.M.U. and they are therefore intent
654 on accumulating animals and thereby supplying the M.M.U with as much milk as possible.

They have no thought or care as to what might happen were the official guaranteed price to go, along with the subsidy which supports it. In fact they have singularly little appreciation of the total picture of which they form part and will be content to grumble quietly and
[212] ignorantly as long as the present artificial situation brings them a steady income. They are both illiterate (Case IX).

(c) An illiterate farmer and herdsman (Case VI)
178 keeps no accounts of the finances of his farm working.
434 The money of the household is "kept in one purse" from
454 which all expenses, farm maintainance and improvement, household expenses and all 'extra' items such as the
234 provision of dowries and wedding costs, etc., are met.
654 This farmer admits to having been able to save more than £1000 as a result of the 1939-45 War but observes that today they "have a hard job to earn the daily bread".
[451] He claims that the savings had all gone by 1958 - partly on improvements to the house but mostly on the purchase of cows as part of his grand design to join the hundreds of other farmers in Malta and Gozo striving to ride on the crest of the wave of the M.M.U. guaranteed price for all milk produced. It is held that this pattern is typical of Maltese farming, and particularly dairying, today. The main energies of the farmer are devoted to making as large a profit as he can while the artificially-supported market for milk is maintained.

178 (d) A literate part-time farmer (Case XIII) keeps
434 accounts of the working of his farm. His second employ-
241 ment brings him in over £5 per week for all but a few weeks of the year and at the expense of only a small amount of his time and effort. In a normal year he
[511] reckons to make an income of about £450 of which about a third goes in costs of seeds, transport and manure, etc. and a further £50 in hiring labour. On account of the steady income from his other job farming has something of the quality of a hobby, a pursuit to be followed

178 434 241 because he has always been used to doing it and one which enables him to provide many of the food items needed by the family. Moreover he feels that his sons, who emigrated some years ago, will eventually wish to return to Malta and will be still enough attracted to the way of life which bred them to want to cultivate a small piece of land themselves during their retirement.

For this man, therefore, farming lacks the character of the bitter struggle with debt which it has for (a). To this extent he is typical of the large and growing number of part-time farmers in Malta today whose livelihood is provided by their non-agricultural job but who maintain a sort of residual interest in the land both as the source of 'extras' and as a link with the farming community from which they are but one generation, or less, removed.

156 241 426 The link with the land, mentioned under (d), gives both the full- and the part-time farmer a sense of independence to which he clings despite the inadequacies of farming from the economic point of view. This sense of independence is revealed in cases where the farmer is not prepared to consider taking a loan, even from the Government at only 1% interest, partly because, as he says, he is "not used to it", but rather perhaps because the variable fortunes of farming (crop failure, storm damage, market fluctuations, etc.) might make him unable to continue payment of the interest on the loan. He wants to be beholden to no-one. Even the house in which he lives was bought by him from his own savings without the help of loans (d).

THE FAMILY BUDGET

472 511 It appears that MONEY is a variable but important factor in the operation of the modern Maltese farm as an economic or uneconomic unit. Money within the household, as distinct from the farm, merits further consideration.

As already suggested, there is generally no clear distinction made by the farmer between the finances pertaining to his farm and those of his family and its maintainance. The most common practice is for there to be "one purse" (Cases VI and X). Into this go all profits from sale of produce or livestock and out of it come the costs of running farm and household. As seen, the farm unit itself is not run with a budget in most cases and there is rarely any attempt on the part of the farmer to cost-account the working of his farm as far as the labour of his family and himself is concerned (Case X). [451] Similarly it is still the exception rather than the rule to find a herdsman who keeps cost accounts of his milk production. In many cases he knows he is making a loss, though of the details he has no notion. In carrying on his farming under these conditions he seems

472 to be suffering from a mixture of inertia and pure inability
511 to organize the accounts of his business. In some cases he
[65] is compelled to put forward an outline statement for income
[157] tax assessment but generally his illiteracy and suspicion makes him unwilling to trust other individuals with details of his income and expenditure.

511 Within the family, however, this suspicion does not
454 normally exist. In fact the housewife tends to have full
[593] call on the contents of the "one purse" although in only a few cases was it found that she was making any detailed attempt at budgeting for the expenses of her home and family. As with the operation of the farm so with the home, the money is dispensed as demanded but all the time the instinct to save, observed by the 1911 Royal Commissioners (B/186), is there. The traditional peasant idea is
[178] that a large hoard of money or valuables will serve as an insurance when the expected depression arrives. Despite the opinion of the 1911 Commissioners, the notion that the saved capital would be better invested, possibly in capital equipment, is only now spreading to a considerable part of the farming community of the Islands.

511 In the day-to-day expenses of the traditional Maltese
437 village household, barter played a considerable part.
178 Today instances of it are rare and money is the fully accepted medium of exchange. As already indicated the Maltese farmer is not so far removed from his peasant past as may at first sight appear to be the case and one of the basic aims of his farming is still the provision of food
[433] for his family. The average farm in Malta, whatever its basis (stock, dairying or field produce), usually strives
[294] to produce as much of the food needs of the family as possible, though the provision of the family's clothing, as in the past when home-grown cotton was spun and woven to make clothes for the members of the grower's family, is no longer attempted.

262 Thus the food bought in by the farmer's wife includes
438 the 'new' items of diet which cannot be grown on the home farm: preserves, processed cheeses, spaghetti and farinaceous pasta, processed meats, tea, coffee, and evaporated milk (inordinately popular throughout the Islands).
[656] Flour rationing since the early part of the 1939-45 War has killed bread making as a home industry. Meat, except for rabbit, fowl and small birds, has to be purchased, as all
[433] slaughtering is Government-controlled. The farmer does aim to produce the basic vegetables - potatoes, beans, peas, pumpkins, melons, tomatoes, onions, garlic, artichokes, endives, celery, cucumber, carrots, and fruits - oranges, apples, lemons, figs, peaches, etc., required by the family.

262 369 In respect of diet an important distinction between town and country emerges. In the towns the diet is essentially 'Italian' with the full complement of spaghetti and other pasta dishes while 'English' food is now also readily available; but in the country districts there is notably less pasta and its place is taken by potatoes and other vegetables. The townsman who has in any case to buy all his food has accepted Italian ideas on diet with certain local, Maltese modifications, but the countryman, still able to produce much of his own food, clings to vegetables for the bulk constituents of his diet. Bread is however a staple of both town and country (v. Section 2).

272 273 262 511 A range of soft drinks, commercial wines, spirits (whiskey is very popular throughout Maltese society) are now standard elements in the diet, while luxury foods such as chocolate, biscuits and the wide range of sweet cakes ('qaq') are further examples of items which have now established themselves as needs and, consequently, as demands on the family purse.

178 291 Nowadays clothes (or at least the materials from which they are made) are bought by the housewife. This in itself has produced a minor revolution in rural economy. Traditionally the simple garments of cotton cloth were made at home or at least within the village and were worn by the field worker until they could be worn no more. Today a new range of clothing demands have appeared. The farmer now wants better clothes and footwear, but the greatest change is among the younger farming generation who want to dress like the youths of the towns. The retail sale of clothing in the rural districts has expanded rapidly, especially since the 1939-45 War years brought in the widespread use of military surplus material.

423 362 511 Housing is important in the present consideration because money is now being spent by the farmer both on buying his own house where he can but also on developing it and improving the furnishings.

[178] Having seen the comparatively well-appointed town dwellings he is not content with his poor country cottage.

178 511 There is also a wide range of incidental luxury or semi-luxury items which are being added to the list of 'needs'. Thus costs of travelling, entertainment and recreation all require money. Payments to the Church have now largely replaced the one-time gifts in kind, and taxes, paid by a few members of the farming community, can clearly only be met with cash.

451 511 [123] The first difficulty in investigating BUDGETS is the typical reticence to talk on matters financial. The second and more important draw-back is the aforementioned

457 511 lack of distinction between the money spent on the farm and that spent on the household.

In Case X there is an exceptional degree of trust and [593] co-operation between husband and wife. Unlike the average Maltese farmer, the husband in this Case (literate and English-speaking) keeps some check on income and expenditure in the form of receipts and documents relating to the Pitkal and other transactions. He observes that his keeping such vouchers was regarded as "a waste of time" by his contemporaries until an instance arose where they proved of major importance and benefit.

[454] At the end of 1957 he talked vaguely of a bank balance of £1,000. By April of the following year this had fallen to "£600" on account of certain heavy expenses (v. Case X). The period in question was financially atypical for this man because he was at the time rapidly expanding his herd of pigs, and he also suffered very badly from the severe storms of October, 1957.

The preparation of any kind of account for him or for any farmer like him is further complicated by the uncommercial approach which is made to the labour of the farmer himself(and in this Case that of a brother and nephew who normally work with him). Tasks are performed because custom demands that they are done and a job is not neglected because the return on it is insufficient. Thus [511] the labour of the farmer and his relatives does not figure as a cost in production (Section 2).

His income derives largely from the sale of fruit 434 (figs, apples, plums, pomegranates, etc.) but is variable. 454 In 1953 the two brothers shared £620 but in the 1956-57 458 season a larger amount of actual produce fetched only £340 to be shared between the two men. The nephew "receives something when a crop is sold". Other items sold in 1956-57 were grapes (£32) and smaller sales of tomatoes, sulla and potatoes. Thus in the 1956-57 season each of the brothers received a gross profit of about £250 on produce sold. This takes no account of food consumed directly by the family (for details v. Case X) nor of the virtual income in a poor year such as 1956-57 from savings. This feature is crucial. Given the normal conditions of peace, with no distortions as a result of war and siege, it becomes clear that the Maltese farmer is, in the great majority of cases, attempting to gain on the swings of the good year the saveable profit which he expects to lose on the roundabouts of a bad year not far [181] hence. This insecurity of his capital is important in his reluctance to lay out money on new methods of production or farm management and in part also echoes the conservation and inertia of the traditional peasant

6:Beeley K-5 (1957-1958) 1959 EZ6 Malta EZ6

and inertia of the traditional peasant.

STANDARD OF LIVING

178 511 [436] The past century and a half have seen the development from peasant to commercial farming, along with the adoption of money as the basis of exchange, and the appearance of a large range of new demands in diet, clothing, housing, luxuries, recreation, etc. Some observations on the living standards of the farming community during the period are now indicated.

175 511 369 178 Speaking of living standards in the Malta of the early nineteenth century Price considers that "an identity and cohesion prevailed not only in major economic trends but in the economic habits of the people" (B/556, p.8). Thus "In these circumstances it is possible to examine together the habits of rural labourers, urban labourers, artisans, small farmers and fishermen...." (B/556, p.9). Price holds that during the first half of the nineteenth century there was in fact little change in the living standards prevailing in the Maltese Islands despite the fluctuations evident within the national economy as a whole. "Years of prosperity may have brought a slight increase in the ratio of wheaten to barley bread or in the use of novel clothing such as straw hats. But, it seems clear, the chief effect of prosperity was to increase the consumption of oil, alcohol and tobacco; these, together with his religion, ranked first in the list of desirable and important things in the minds of the Maltese flush with surplus cash. Presumably these were the things he hoped society would give while his traditional diet, clothing and shelter were the things he expected society to provide" (B/556, p.9-10). 175 434 369 Among the unskilled urban and rural workers there was a notable uniformity in wage throughout the period. Price speaks of 6¾d for a day's work for a man (and about 1d only for a women) but observes that skilled workers, and especially those in dockyard employ, could expect very much more (B/556, p.9-10). For the mass of the labouring and farming community therefore income was of the order of a few pence per day but, as suggested, the prevailing self-sufficiency of the near-peasant farmer of the period made actual monetary income an inadequate indicator of standards of living. For the urban worker, on the other hand, lacking the farm basis, the low wage level meant poverty and hardship. More especially "Poverty..... pressed heavily on the under-employed" (B/556, p. 11).

175 288 The importance of cotton to the nineteenth century Maltese farmer has been discussed in Section 1. In 1839

175 288 the Royal Commissioners reported (B/184) that "The principal manufacture of the casals[28] is spinning with the spinning-wheel, or sometimes with the spindle. Second to this is the weaving of canvas, cotton and cloth used for clothing by the country people, and the necessary preparatory work, such as winding, beating the cotton, etc." But the 175 178 288 industry was then much weaker than it had been two generations before and as it retreated during the nineteenth century no ready replacement was forthcoming from [462] within agriculture itself. The farmer had to rely on other crops while, socially, the change affected the family as a working unit for cotton processing had been 175 largely the work of women. Even in 1839 a considerable 178 amount of blame for the prevailing low living standards 288 could be attached to the decline of cotton. The Commis- 735 sioners reported that the prevalent poverty had become 511 worse since 1814 on account of the shortage of work and that unemployment was worst of all in the rural districts, the cotton areas, where the small wages not only precluded saving but also led to begging and stealing which was "One of the worst consequences of the prevalent poverty and at the same time a most active cause of it" (B/184).

Poverty, wages, sanitation and disease gave rise to much concern and investigation in the middle decades of the nineteenth century - especially in so far as the conditions of the labouring and rural classes were concerned. The Royal Commissioners' report in 1838-9 (B/184); Miège in 1840 (B/516); the Census two years later and those made in 1851 and at ten-year intervals thereafter (B/166,167); reports on sanitary conditions in 1867 and 1874 (B/223,226); on distress in 1824 and 1867-68 (B/205,207); on mortality in 1874-75 (B/225, et seq); and on cholera in 1865 (B/224), all threw light on the poor living standards of the Maltese. However the 1874-75 report on mortality did hasten to qualify its observations with [262] "Poverty, indeed, at present, is not generally so great as it was in former times (about 40 years ago), when the bulk of the lower classes, especially in the country districts, lived constantly on barley bread of the worst description" while "It must also be admitted that the sanitary condition of these Islands, generally, is not so bad as that of other countries, and that, of late years, it has improved..." (B/225, p.7).

175 511 [369] [464] [458] The basic conclusion to emerge from this evidence is that there existed a considerable gulf in general living standards between the people of the towns and those of the country. There was also an important contrast within the then rapidly expanding urban area,

175 458 511 [468] [184] between the unskilled labourer and the skilled. This dichotomy was a regular feature during the nineteenth century, as in the twentieth, and is to be distinguished from the rise and fall of prosperity and depression which characterized the totality of economic life in Malta. Malta was highly susceptible to events in the Mediterranean basin and in Europe as a whole and was much affected by changes in trading patterns and in strategy, so that the fortunes of the Maltese fluctuated with the alternation of prosperity and depression during the nineteenth century. [731] The sequence of wars, trade booms and slumps, droughts, epidemics and other events which affected the Mediterranean in general was particularly strongly felt in vulnerable Malta (B/556).

175 184 511 178 The major economic developments arising from the growth of the dockyard and the consolidation of the Islands' role have been outlined in Section 1. The various stages in this expansion were reflected in the economic life and the living standards of the Maltese just as the chain of external events made their presence felt. In all this the fortunes of one section of the population, such as the farming community, could at no time stand unaffected by fluctuations within the economy of the Islands as a whole.

175 178 [184] [871] Malta remained sharply divided within itself by class, district and education and the parallel differences of living standards between one section of society and another were continued. But the later decades of the nineteenth century saw, on the social as distinct from the economic plane, the beginnings of general education which, during the present century, was to remove the illiteracy which had for so long prevented the rural classes in Malta and Gozo from having any experience of life and society outside the limits of the village. [184] [369] Improvements in transport and communication within the Islands and the spread of amenities from the Urban area to the villages in the later nineteenth and in the twentieth centuries further tended to remove the veil of isolation which had shrouded the villages of Malta and Gozo and kept them cut off from the social and cultural [621] changes of the towns. Traditionally, each village had been a closely-knit unit under a Parish priest, having little contact with Valletta and perhaps less with the villages in other parts of the Islands (Section 1).

In the later decades of the nineteenth century the forces indicated were beginning to modify the position but it was not until the present century and particularly

178 [175] the years after 1939 that the cumulative effects of education, emancipation and communication were to produce a society very different from that which Maltese country [511] folk had known for centuries (Section 1). It became [184] different when the traditionally depressed sections of the community became restless and began to demand the improvements in their living standards which they came to believe should be theirs by right as well as need.

178 184 369 This is not to suggest that the present position of Maltese rural society is an 'end-product' of change. The opposite is true. The old and new exist side by side in agriculture and in the farming community of the Islands today. Some people, some places, and some features of life and work hold far more tenaciously to the old than do others where comparatively few years have seen considerable modifications of the traditional pattern.

175 458 464 511 By 1912, the Royal Commissioners were able to observe that the living standards of the labouring classes of Malta and Gozo compared well with those of other Mediterranean countries (B/186, p.25-6). "Building", they said, "is cheap and good and the country people are exceptionally well-housed". But, in their consideration of the economic state of the Islands as a whole, the Commissioners thought the picture much more gloomy. The depression which they found, though of only recent appearance, was being felt by the mass of the people, although "until the advent of the present depression, the condition of the people has been one of comparative comfort". To appreciate "The present distress, and the greatly extended unemployment of the working people of Malta.....it is necessary to recognise the entirely artificial nature of their former prosperity and employments, which depended to a large extent upon Imperial expenditure...." (B/186, p.12). Here did the Commissioners strike at the root of the problem which has grown to formidable proportions in the half-century since the report was made. They pointed to the position in which the economic structure of the country as a whole was based on the shifting sands of Imperial naval and military expenditure and in which the living standards of the Maltese population were therefore tied indirectly and directly to that Imperial expenditure. Moreover, within the Maltese population itself, it is not difficult to see that the first to be hit by a drop in Imperial expenditure (as happened between 1902 and 1911 and, again, in the post-1945 period) were and are the labouring and poorer classes generally lacking alternative employment in the Islands, in the event of their becoming redundant, and having often little or no capital reserves.

178 464 511 In a consideration of the standard of living of the Maltese population in general and of the farming section of it in particular during the present century it is seen that the two World Wars (1914-18 and 1939-45) saw tremendous upheavals in this aspect of Maltese life, as in so many others. In the case of the 1914-18 struggle "there is no doubt that the War first and principally and secondly the political events that have occurred since have completely altered and raised the standard of living of the working classes in Malta...." (B/130 - 1930, p.ix). A distinction is here infered between the working classes and the upper and professional or business classes whose previously higher standards were maintained unimpaired or even improved. The wage-rate index after the 1914-18 War gives only an intermittent picture as official statistics on wage rates in agriculture have been very limited. The Blue Books of the inter-War period observed that "No official information is available" regarding agricultural wages (B/165) but the Cost-of-Living investigations between 1943 and 1946 are little better for they are concerned almost exclusively with non-agricultural workers (B/213, 214, 217).

178 464 465 511 It does emerge, however, that the 1914-18 War brought little change in Maltese living standards when compared with the effects of the 1939-45 War. In 1946 it was decided that "The war years have produced improvements in the standard of living and we may hope that the working class family will never revert to the pre-war standard" (B/217, para.5). Costs to the consumer of food, clothing and other items had doubled and trebled between 1939 and 1946 (B/217, Appendix I, II, IIA) but wages had also increased. In 1936 an average wage for labour in 'trade and manufacture' was put at an annual £82, or about 31/7d per week (B/165-1936, Section 23). Even by 1943 an average weekly wage for such workers had grown to £2.16s, plus an average 'other income' of a further 18/6d weekly. Against this was an average total weekly expenditure of £3.12.9d (B/213, Appendix R).

Farm work had shared in the increased wages. A 1936 estimate for agricultural labour put the weekly rate between 21/- and 24/- (B/165 - 1936, Section 23). The 1943 report quotes one farm labourer, among its sample 100 workers, as gaining a total of £2.16s per week, or the same as the average 'earned income' (without 'other income') of all the sample 100 workers (B/213, Appendix R, No.90).

000 During the War years the farmer had been able to

175 722 511 454 During the war years the farmer had been able to strengthen his financial position to an unprecendented extent. The high prices which he could command left him with a large reserve upon which to draw during the decade after 1945. Today these reserves are dwindling and disappearing. In part they have been put towards capital improvements on the farm - notably the acquisition of cows and machinery (Section 2), and in part they have been spent [369] on routine home and family maintainance. The farmer in post-War Malta and Gozo has been struggling to live up to 'Urban' standards, to many of which he was introduced as a [426] result of the War. He has, in many cases, been living above his means to the extent of being perpetually in debt. He has somehow failed to adapt himself to his new position and still looks back nostaligically, at least from the financial point of view, to his commanding position during the siege.

434 511 171 [369] Today the farmer's standard of living compares unfavourably with that of the Urban working classes but is notably higher than that of other farming communities in nearby Mediterranean countries. In rural Greece, for example, annual earnings frequently do not exceed £25, although the average per capita income for the whole country is over £60[29]. Yet prices for simple clothing and other essential items are often quite exorbitant, especially for the impoverished Greek farmer. A 1954 survey of seventy Libyan farms in the Zawia area of northern Tripolitania found an average 'farm earnings' of £136 per annum[30], but the present rate for casual farm labour in the area is some 5/- per day only (about £75 per annum) and even less in more rural districts[31].

Thus in Libya a field-labourer may expect to earn little more than half the income of a land-holding farmer. [434] In Malta, however, the situation appears reversed, and the labourer without field commitments of his own can demand his 25/- for an eight-hour day and emerge, in many cases, markedly better off than the farmer who hired him and who stands the loss on unsold, unprofitable or damaged crops.

511 434 Within his own country the Maltese farmer has, on average, a standard of life still slightly below the general level, although the disparity is by no means as great as it was in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Above-average exceptions include those farmers who have been able to profit from the present regime of guaranteed milk sales by building up a large herd, or those who can still draw upon war-time savings or other accumulated reserves.

735 434 The C.A.R.E.[27] assessment of poverty made for the purpose of free food distributions to poor and needy

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735 747 434 648 families provides a most useful basis for a comparison. The assessment included a scale of income and other wealth and assets against family size. Thus a household of four persons, in 1958, with a total income below £5 per week or a family of 16 receiving less than £6.6s would qualify for the free food[32].

162 735 434 The 6568 'poor and needy' families entitled on the above basis to receive C.A.R.E. supplies[33] were classified by place of residence (February, 1958)[34]. Households in which the breadwinner was a farmer or farm-labourer were, in addition, also listed separately. The residential divisions used were those demarcated in Section 1 on the basis of the farming (i.e. rural) element in the working population (Map 2).

TABLE 2

DISTRICT	A POPULATION[35]	B 'Poor & Needy' as % Population	C FARMERS[36]	D 'Poor & Needy' Farmers as % Farmers	E B/D
Urban Area	134,399	5.9	224	4.4	1.34
Fringe	83,898	8.8	1150	5.4	1.59
Inner Rural	41,955	9.4	1513	5.8	1.62
Rural	48,478	10.6	3404	9.1	1.16
Outer Rural	10,892	14.5	1522	21.8	0.67
Total	319,620	8.2	7813	9	0.9:

369 735 511 162 The figures in B and D illustrate the declining living standards with distance from the Urban Area. Since, as has been observed in Section 1, the rural community in Malta and Gozo is based primarily on farming they therefore reflect the lower living standards towards the agricultural parts of Malta and, particularly, of Gozo. D and E show that the farmers in the Inner Rural and Fringe zones tend to be less poor than those in other districts, though in the Rural Zone they are nearer the general level (E). In the Outer Rural zone (most of Gozo, and Mġarr in Malta), however, the farmer is patently very much poorer (D) even than the general average for the zone (B) which is by definition the most dependent on agriculture. As a class, the farmers in this zone are one third below the general level as far as their standard of living is concerned (cf. the 0.67 under E).

The figures for the Urban Area reveal that although only 4.4% of these 224 farmers are poor enough to qualify for C.A.R.E. help (the lowest percentage under D) they are nearer the general level (B) than is the case in either the Fringe or the Inner Rural zones. The difficult position of these 'urban' farmers is exemplified by Case V.

The over-all averages show that the farmers, of whom 9% were 'poor' by the C.A.R.E. definition, in 1958, are, as a class, slightly poorer than the 8.2% average for the whole population.

This pattern of comparatively low living standards in rural-agricultural Malta and Gozo is the essence of the problem with which this Section has been concerned. While farming and inferior standards of life remain synonomous in the Islands the younger generation of the rural community will not be content to remain on the land.

SECTION 4 : The Farmer's Outlook and Attitudes.

The importance of the past in understanding the present in Maltese agriculture has been emphasized. The change from peasant to commercial farming has been considered from its technical (Section 2) and its economic aspects (Section 3). The social background to this change is, however, no less important, particularly in so far as it relates to the work, thought and attitudes of a farmer who in fact is often little removed from the traditional when one penetrates a veneer of commercial profit-farming. Both among the literate and illiterate sections of the farming community this question of attitudes and outlook is of fundamental importance in any efforts towards improvements in Maltese agriculture.

The social environment of the Maltese countryman may be seen as three concentric circles, the family, village, and Malta. To the Gozitan who has never crossed the sea to Malta and to the old farmer who knows little of Valletta the concept of 'Malta' is something large and indeterminate. Even for the majority of the rural population, for whom Valletta and the towns are becoming a familiar part of experience, the Islands are large enough for them to feel none of the claustrophobia of which visitors to Malta complain. The 'National' unit is big enough for the farmer to speak of "Il-Gvern" - the Government of which he has heard frequently though imprecisely on all sides and on which he blames many of his economic and social problems. In this important concept of 'Gvern' no very clear distinction is made between the local Maltese authorities and the Imperial side of the Dyarchy[37]. Neither is allegiance to political parties very significant for personality is more important than party. Historically, this attitude to a remote 'Gvern' probably descends from the tradition of rule in the Islands which has included foreign British government since 1800 and the paternal but rigid hold of the Knights of St. John during their previous two and a half centuries in the Islands.

178 (3) On account of those same physical limitations
241 mechanization of field-work cannot be expected to solve all
407 labour problems in Maltese agriculture. An initial, over-
464 optimistic emphasis on large tractors and other heavy machinery has given way to a rapid increase in the number and popularity of the small rotary-cultivators. But even this cannot be expected to displace completely the wooden plow and hand implement working (Section 2).

However, mechanized farm implements, particularly the small, manoeuvrable rotary-cultivator type of hand tractor, have enabled a reduced number of farmers to work their fields more intensively, and, in some cases, to increase the area worked by a single individual.

The neglect of those aspects of farming where manual work is dominant and necessary have, nevertheless, accompanied this change with the bizarre result that intensification of effort and neglect are proceeding simultaneously (B/336).

178 (4) A basic factor in the present situation, in which
434 the young farmer is retreating from farming, has been the emergence of a demand for money income (Section 3). The traditional pattern of peasant, subsistence farming in which the main object was the support of the farmer and his family has been replaced by a money-conscious outlook in farming. The farmer now expects his farm to produce a profit with which he can

(a) purchase those items no longer produced on his farm or by his family (clothing, bread etc., etc.),

(b) purchase items which have recently become part of his regular demands and for which money is a sine qua non (property, farm machinery and equipment, clothing, preserved and other imported foods and drinks, recreation, transport, etc.),

433 Food, as an item of family expenditure, nowadays figures
511 especially prominantly

(a) where the income derives mainly from milk sold to the M.M.U. and where the land is put, almost exclusively, to fodder,

(b) among part-time farmers (a very rapidly growing element of the farming community in recent years) who concentrate on fodder crops because of the comparatively little labour involved and the generally good market prospects.

178 But of greater significance in the long-term view is the
434 fact that these new demands for monetary gain are a particularly prominent feature among the present younger generation of the farming community. For them a substantially increased income is synonomous with social and economic betterment. Since they do not envisage such an increased income coming from farming they are all the more anxious to leave the

industry in search of it.

(5) The Maltese farmer (and, incidentally, also the fishermen) has today a standard of living below the average for the whole country (Section 3). In large part this is related to

(a) the economic and technical difficulties facing his agriculture(Section 2),

(b) his inability, in many cases, to make the change from peasant, subsistence to the money-based, commercial farming of today (v.4).

In fact a considerable section of the full-time farming community is now operating either with very little or no profit or is striving to work in a perpetual, though fluctuating, debt (Section 3).

Yet this comparatively low living standard vis-à-vis the non-farming section of the population is in fact lower than it appears statistically (Section 3) because

(a) the farmer does not enjoy the limited working day (e.g. eight hours) demanded in most other occupations, and also demanded, significantly, by the full-time farm-labourer without fields of his own (Section 2),

(b) the farmer has even today a more modest level of demands (housing, clothing, food, recreation, etc.) than have the bulk of the rest of the population despite the growth in such demands, discussed in Section 3,

(c) many farmers have been living at a rather higher standard, than that to which they were accustomed, since 1945 on the savings they have retained from their profits accumulated during the siege conditions early in the war. These reserves are now, however, dwindling and disappearing.

(6) The farmer is still, in many cases, thinking as a 'peasant' subsistence producer although he is at the same time attempting to operate in a now commercially-orientated agriculture. This emerges in his attitudes to 'officialdom' in the shape of the Department of Agriculture, to co-operatives, to Farmers' Unions, to the agents and middlemen concerned with marketing of produce and the supply of seeds, etc. and to his fellow farmers. He is still very much an individualist in outlook and sceptical of any novel feature not tried and trusted in his experience. He is cautious where outsiders are concerned - notably Government officials, and he is doubtful of the validity, for Malta and Maltese conditions, of the advice of non-Maltese experts on agriculture and related topics. He will, for example, even look for a possible element of treachery in such as the Government's recent plant to improve the packing and grading of produce for export.

On the other hand, however, the farmer is characteristically loud in his assertions that "Government should adopt

*159 234 premises were deemed by the sanitary authorities to be unfit for animals. He has no goat pens near his house but is prevented by the lack of capital from making substantial improvements in his facilities. Owing to shortage of space, he prefers to buy in fully-grown animals rather than to breed his own, which would be cheaper. Fodder storage [246] (he produces just enough sulla to feed his own goats) is a further problem and he tries to 'make do' with odd corners of often unsuitable space.

*159 241 433 Crop production is geared to the provision of fodder for the goats, together with the supply of vegetables for the family, and grapes (for wine), some tomatoes and other items for casual sale to local shops.

*159 434 The income side of his budget depends on the proceeds from the milk sold to the M.M.U. In August, 1957, he was getting about 16/9d a day for the milk sold. His grapes for 1957 brought him a further £66. His largest expense is fodder (apart from sulla) and its price is a constant [427] cause of grumbling and bitterness by Guzepp. Rents for 1957 totalled £35, that is about £1 per tomna for good land (generally red soiled 'hamrija') and 15/- for poorer, whiter ('abjad') soils. His cropping illustrates a common [241] practice in Maltese farming in that he tends to plant more [433] of a crop which has just had a 'good' season and thereby frequently suffers from glut conditions. Thus in 1958 he aimed to plant a large area to marrow (gargha baghli) because "last year's crop was good". In the previous year he had been unable to get all the potato seed he would have liked but, at the end of the season, was able to buy in potatoes very cheaply for the table because of the general glut in the crop which he had, as it transpired, fortunately avoided.

*159 438 443 Guzepp, like most farmers, is very critical of the great gulf between the price given by the pitkal and that paid by the consumer. In a small way he strives to avoid this by selling some of his produce directly in the local village, but this brings him only some £12 per annum.

X 159 ●511 829 178 Expenses are few apart from food, clothing and a few extra items such as Church contributions. His bill for entertainment is practically nil and his children are not yet old enough to demand large sums of pocket money - which one foresees they will do. Guzepp is very anxious to enlarge his farm and his herd and to improve his accommodation. In this development one feels he is looking to the future support of his now school-age sons. Certainly the older of these seem at present to look forward to following in their father's footsteps. But it is clear also that Guzepp's own deep attachment to the land and to farming is

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[245] - Many stocks now 20 years old require replacement.
- No early potatoes grown "because of sea-spray".
- Sulla sufficient for his own stock.

[233] [461] (ii) - Half of every working day is devoted to grazing the goats on waste and abandoned land.
- Fodder from his own sulla and barley but has to buy cake and beans, prices varying between £2 and £3 per qantar - expensive.

[241] (iii) - Manure from his own stock provides all his requirements and leaves surplus for sale.
- Uses 6 bags of sulphate of ammonia p.a., the only chemical fertiliser.

[231] - Pig feed costs 11/- per sack which lasts his 5 pigs 4 days.

H. General.

*159 829 241
- Has a hopeful attitude towards farming but still expects a great deal of Government help in the form of grants, loans and subsidies.
- Claims that his children intend to succeed him on the land but they are young enough to change their minds.
- Willing to accept advice, but not impressed by experts who tell him either "things he knows already" or give him advice "which is sound but not applicable to Maltese conditions".
- Has only a very general idea of costs and returns. Takes no account of value of family labour.

*159 [434] [234]
- Basic income is from sale of milk (£300 in 1957) and grapes (£66) plus small quantities of vegetables (c.£12). Spends £100 p.a. on food for family in addition to his own produce.

[511] [454] [241]
- Typical of farmer who is satisfied with his lot, keeps his family decently fed and clothed but spends little or nothing on non-essentials. He is anxious to improve his herd, accommodation and methods but his farm provides no financial surplus with which to do this.

[511]
- Continues to accept a standard of living far below that of his more sophisticated compatriots.

CASE III : Nardu (A goats' milk producer)

*159 157 Illiterate and suspicious, Nardu typifies the most conservative element in Maltese farming for whom nothing new can be worthy of consideration. It is probable that no amount of lecturing, demonstrations of improved methods, or capital loans from the Government, would persuade him to change the ways he knows. The prospect of machinery does not impress him although he thinks of acquiring a rotary cultivator (at about £245). His observation is, when freely translated, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" (he is aged 40).

*159 237 [425] His father was a [illegible] with a few fields. Nardu's brother took over the family business and sold his share of the fields to Nardu, who also bought out the shares of his five sisters. He has since concentrated all his effort on his herd of goats, regarding his fields primarily as a source of fodder. During the fifteen months of study his herd varied in size from 34 to 50 animals. All the goats are of the local breed as he does "not like horned goats". He is more concerned with producing milk, under the current favourable regime of guaranteed sales to the M.M.U., than with breeding goats. Most of the kids born to his herd are sold for meat or for breeding to a dealer. Payment [426] seems to be made as money becomes available from the M.M.U every two weeks. Often however he admits to being up to two months behind with payment, settling one debt "when the next transaction is afoot".

In 1958, Nardu was talking at length about "getting two or three cows or calves". He "knows about cows from friends" but has not himself got the £300 capital necessary for two. Moreover he observes that "you can't graze cows" and their general upkeep is likely to clash with that of goats, especially where one man is working alone as in this case. There seems to be an element of prestige attached to the ownership of cows in a village such as Nardu's where the vast majority of herdsmen have only goats. Certainly his thinking is not guided by comparative costings of milk production from the cow and goat.

*159 434 [443] ● [511] Nardu's fields produce fodder and some food for the family so that they "will not have to buy in everything from the shops". He reckons to save between 15/- and £1 per week in this way. His wife spends £3 a week on purchased food and she looks back nostalgically to her youth when her mother spent some 30/- per week on food and clothing for a family with twelve children, while she has only three. The steady item of income in Nardu's budget is the money received from the M.M.U. for the goats' milk sold. Shopping is done in the local village but Nardu

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available", and normally delegates most of the work to a labourer who receives 24/- for an occasional day's work.

His own fields produce only a small part of the fodder required by the herd however and Wistin buys in sulla and other fodder "as it is needed". He does not buy regularly nor does he keep any record of his purchases or sales. In December, 1957, he was spending about 15/- per day on fodder other than sulla, on which he had spent £120 during the previous year, 1956. But of costs of production of milk he has little idea. His own labour does not figure as a 'cost'.

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Wistin's family of eleven spends about £1 on food per day and eats potatoes and other vegetables and milk from the home farm to the value of a further 7/6d daily. The new demands on money are observed by both Wistin and his wife. She says that in her youth she "would never have dreamt of spending on clothes the money which her daughters are now spending". "In the old days, a girl went to the sea with her parents or on an occasional visit to Sant Anton - now they go to the cinema or to Valletta to buy shoes for the festa". One of the daughters is shortly to be married to a policeman and Wistin observes that the costs of the wedding and the dowry will be very considerable.

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Wistin is a true herdsman. He has no interests which would upset his heavy routine of work. He is "not interested in festas" and his only relaxation is an occasional visit to the races at Marsa when his children are on holiday from school and able to take the goats out to graze.

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His father was a labourer with the Services and had only a few fields, but Wistin began working for other herdsmen and then gradually built up his own herd to its present size, particularly in the past few years when, in common with many other Maltese and Gozitan herdsmen, he has ridden on the crest of the guaranteed-price wave. None of his children, however, shows any interest in goats and it is clear that both Wistin's wife and his brother-in-law (who has a half-share in the house occupied by Wistin and his family) are actively discouraging the children from planning to follow their father. Their main objection to herding appears to be the long hours and hard work entailed. Wistin is more than a little sad that the herd and farm which he has built up is likely to be broken up for lack of interest among his sons, for, as he says, "Once you leave the fields you never go back...."

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CASE IV : Summary.

(A large-scale goats milk producer with some land.)

A. Land.

6 tmien in the Naxxar-Gharghur Hills region.

*159 423 - 10 field plots in single block of 4 tmien (Rent £2.10.0.), and
- 7 field plots in single block of 2 tmien (Rent £3).
- Grazing ground on Defence Dept., wasteland.

B. Utilisation.

*159 241 311 (i) At any one time about half the land - that of the deep-soil terraces - will be under potatoes with a few vegetables, and the remainder under barley and leguminous fodder.

(ii) The arable land tends to be neglected as a result of pre-occupation with livestock. The land is therefore deteriorating and as soil wash reduces soil-depth and water availability, peas and vetches are replacing less hardy crops. The most accessible fields in this hilly region are worked mainly to meet domestic needs.

*159 231 234 C. Livestock.

90 goats including 75 breeders and 2 billies.
7 sheep for meat and cheesemaking.
This herd built up in farmers lifetime (c.30 years).

D. Capital.

*159 423 (i) No freehold land.

(ii) A freehold village house joint possession of farmer and brother-in-law.

*511 426 (iii) Receives C.A.R.E.[27] food gifts but the family standard of living is by no means poor. No debts except on intra-family loan basis.

E. Labour.

*159 464 (i) Of the family of 11, two children are employed elsewhere and the remainder give occasional help with the stock and on the fields.

(ii) The fields are inaccessible to powered tools. Hired labour for fieldwork - c.15-20 man days @ 24/- a day including mule and implements.

F. Production and Sales.

*159 43 234 (i) Goats milk sales range from February minimum of c.100 lbs. per day to July maximum of 290 lbs. per day. Annual sales of the order of 6,400 galls. @ average price 5/9d per gallon.
Gross income from milk sales c.£1800.
No accurate record of expenditure on purchased feed but total can be estimated as of the order of £500 p.a.
Net income probably not more than £800 p.a.

(ii) Manure sold to arable farmers during first half of year with net profit of £18.

(iii) Home produced and consumed food and milk valued at c.10/- a day.

* 159 23 G. Husbandry.

(i) Livestock feeding of traditional pattern sulla, beans and cake is more carefully regulated in relation to yields than in Case III. Considerable emphasis placed on grazing and on stock exercising.

(ii) Herd suffers fairly severely from abortion and the kids from various diseases - 5 out of 16 in 1956, 4 out of 12 in 1957.
No prophylactic or remedial measures except more careful feeding. Sells sick and old stock for slaughtering.

(iii) Tries to extend period of maximum production by prolonging mating period but prefers to rely on "natural" periodicity rather than on producing off-season high yields. Has high standards for yields and has a good record in local shows for billies and breeders.

*159 434 H. General.

An example of a high-class village goats-milk producer.

159 452 off until mid-November but, in the intervening two and a half months, the purchase of fodder had been continued and the debt maintained. In that September he himself put his debt at £60 and said that at the previous Christmas (1956) it had been £100. Thus a debt of £60 in the flush milk season of highest total receipts from the M.M.U. would appear to be the best financial position he could achieve. Removal of the guaranteed milk price to the producer could result only in ruin for this herdsman and the many in the Islands like him.

159 829 In spite of his own poverty Anglu maintains that he is fully aware of the artificial economic picture of which the guaranteed price is a part. In the same breath however he complains that he could sell his milk for more than the M.M.U. gives him in the short season. Here he overlooks the obvious outcome of a removal of the guarantee during the annual glut.

159 178 291 511 His financial hardships make it impossible for him to hire labour or to invest in any capital improvements to the farm or herd. Neither does it enable him to support his family as he aspires. This is especially evident in the case of clothing because the family lives in an urban area and therefore strives to appear as well dressed as their non-farming neighbours. Anglu observes that there has been a change both in the types of clothing worn and in the occasions on which they are worn. He speaks of a Doctor of the district who used to go barefoot in the streets carrying a pair of shoes to put on before entering a house or Church. Nowadays, by contrast, children attend school with shoes and are generally well turned out. This is particularly true of an urban area, where Anglu's children go to school and where his teenage children go to work - a son as an apprentice carpenter, one daughter as a shop assistant and another as a factory worker. None of his children is likely to contemplate farming as a way of life and means of earning a living, for, in their father's case they can see an extreme example of the problem facing many farmers throughout the Islands today, that is a man unable to make a living wage for himself and his family from a farm limited in possibilities by external factors and dependant on a guarantee which could be removed at a general election.

159 429 CASE V : Summary.

(A landless, urban, small-scale goats' milk producer)

A. Land.

Rents and grazes 1 tomna of wasteland.
Rents and works as a domestic garden 1 tomna of dry land, in the Urban area.

159 245 in a single picking and do not require the same attention to quality as those for the table.

159 245 231 451 In this move towards more vine production and the recent interest in pigs Ġamri is making a conscious effort to emphasize the profitable in place of the unprofitable. Income for Ġamri means the receipts on produce sold. Unlike most farmers he keeps a record of this income in order to see "how business is progressing" and in order to enable him and his brother to effect a share-out of profits. As found generally Ġamri takes no account of his own labour, or that of his brother or nephews, in his costing. Moreover the position is complicated by the fact that no clear distinction is made between money spent on the home and family, and money spent on field rents, costs of seed, manure, etc. It is all held [593] "in one purse". Ġamri himself maintains that a more usual practice is for the farmer to give his wife a fixed amount for house-keeping but, in his own case, there is clearly a high degree of trust and co-operation between husband and wife.

159 434 454 [511] At Easter, 1958, Ġamri spoke of a balance of some £400, less than half his reserves of a year previously. The drop was due to a £200 outlay on pigs and pig-sties together with several smaller items (such as £50 for street surfacing, £30 for a sewing machine, £15 hospital expenses, £30 for annual field rents, etc.) and the cost of repairing the damage wrought by the exceptionally heavy storms of late 1957. During the year 1956-57 it is estimated that Ġamri's income was about £350. £250 of this came from the sale of field produce as shown below, the rest is an estimate of income from pig sales and other items.

159 434

Income:	From partnership land.	From Ġamri's Land	TOTAL
Fruit.....	£340	-	£340
Grapes.....	49	£ 8	57
Sulla.....	13	15	28
Potatoes.....	12	-	12
Melons.....	11	-	11
Tomatoes.....	7	13	20
Totals.....	£432	£36	£468
Ġamri's share	£216	£36	£252

159 434 435 This income pattern is by no means standard from year to year. The 1956-57 season was a poor year, with potato prices to the farmer low, sulla yields below average and a glut of fruit. 1953, on the other hand, was the best of recent years and brought each of the two brothers an income of £310 on fruit alone. The 1956-57 season with its glut in fruit found a quantity greater than in 1953 bringing less return than in that year on the market. This uncertainty as to income between one year and the next is today more important to the arable farmer than to the herdsmen who can rely on the M.M.U.'s guaranteed price and can therefore estimate his income more [494] accurately. The arable, and, especially, the fruit-farmer

159 434 454 is not encouraged by this situation to invest his capital in any improvement for which no immediate return is apparent. Ġamri has, however, put a large amount of money into pigs and would seem to regard this as a better investment than putting his money into capital equipment for his fields. He has in [407] fact no mechanical equipment, although his brother has a rotary cultivator which Ġamri hires at a reduced rate of 16/- per tomna (instead of £1) for his own holding. No charge is made when the machine is used on the joint holding, in which case Ġamri contributes to the cost of fuel.

159 511 262 Expenses within the household are difficult to determine since so much of the food eaten by the family comes from the fields worked by Ġamri and his brother. This includes vegetables, fruit, salads, melons. Tomato paste (kunserva), a common element of diet throughout Malta, is home-made in this case. The two goats and two sheep supply the family with milk; though tinned milk is normally bought in for babies as required. Milk pasteurized by the M.M.U. is not bought. They occasionally buy in a little cheese, but most of this, and all eggs, are produced on the farm. Fish is caught from time to time by Ġamri himself, but some, such as tinned tuna, is bought. Poultry and rabbits for the family table are from the farm stock but some small birds, such as quail, are shot ('hunted') for roasting or stews. A home-made wine is supplemented with purchased soft drinks, notably the ubiquitous "Kinnie". Other items purchased include meat and ham, coffee, jams, biscuits and luxury confectionery (for special days such as first Communions, Confirmation, etc), olive oil and olives, together with the rationed goods (1958) -butter, bread, sugar and farinaceous paste (għaġin). Ġamri observes that the rationed (subsidized) supplies are usually insufficient for the family so additional quantities of these items have to be bought. In the case of bread, for example, these more costly off-the-ration purchases bring [354] the total weekly bill to some thirteen shillings. The sole means of cooking and heating is paraffin (petrolju), as throughout most of the rural areas of the Islands, and the family spends about 3s 6d weekly on this. Heating is not considered essential even during the coldest part of the winter when the family "close the door" (Ġamri).

159 262 [369] The diet of the family is essentially typical of rural Malta. In some details this differs from that found among urban working classes in the Islands but these differences are of emphasis rather than content. Thus the countryman tends to consume potatoes, the produce of his own farm, where the townsman relies for the bulk element of his diet on paste, notably Italian spaghetti and macaroni. An important factor is religion and its fasting and other restrictions. [785] Fasts are of three types (i) the Lenten Fast - "In the old

This increase in the

178 291 [311] [371] [702] range of demands along with the near disappearance of home-produced garments has therefore required a much enlarged financial outlay on this part of the family budget. The villager now often takes a special pride in the clothing of his children, both the infants and those attending school. The compulsory attendance at school throughout the Islands has made the countryman more clothes-conscious, while the War of 1939-45 and the conscription which it brought put some men into shoes (or boots) for the first time and demanded that they be dressed to a rather higher standard than had been their practice before.

* 159 241 461 [464] Work and Labour

As seen, Ġamri's normal labour force consists of himself, his brother and nephew. His own children being all below school-leaving age contribute relatively little. This trio apportioned their time, during the agricultural year 1956-57 when a detailed study was made, as under:

(a) Work on crop land, including cultivation, manuring, sowing, irrigation, crop protection, harvesting and transport of produce

(i) on the joint holding	- fruit.....	1740	man/hours
	- vines.....	489	" "
	- cereals & fodder...	1437	" "
	- potatoes...	868	" "
	- other vegetables...	505	" "
(ii) on Ġamri's own holding	- vines....	444	" "
	- cereals & fodders..	222	" "
	- vegetables	65	
(b) Other work connected with holding.....		109	" "
(c) Repair of storm damage.....		160	" "
(d) Building of pig-sties.....		100	" "
(e) Miscellaneous.....		677	" "
		6816	man/hours

In short, a total of 6816 man/hours was applied to about 62 tmien of land (excluding contractors' plowing etc.) an average of 110 man/hours per tomna. The above data are based on a daily work record kept by the farmer during the agricultural year 1956-57. The material may also be analysed on the basis of his calendar of activity on the farm for the year (Summary, E), and may be compared with a parallel work-analysis for two other farmers who provided a similar diary of their movements. Whereas Ġamri is an arable- and fruit-farmer, working largely dry (bagħli) fields and terraces, the other two examples chosen for comparative purposes include a man whose farm nucleus is a large and fertile irrigable (saqwi) block (Case XI) and one who is a herdsman with fields producing fodder for his goats together with some vegetables for sale and for family use (Case II).

000 In the first two cases the seasonal distribution of

[P.141]

*159 554 441 511

Socially and economically this man is not a farmer. For two generations the machine importing and other business dealing of the family have given them something of a middle-class status in the village. Their standard of living and the house they occupy reflect their above-average prosperity while their literacy and foreign contacts have further enhanced their social standing.

226 463

PART 3. A Note on the Fishermen of Malta and Gozo.

The fishermen of the Maltese Islands deserve mention in this report as their position today has many points in common with that of the farmers.

226 463 162

A 1957 estimate put their number at 840 (B/177 - 1957, Section F, p.1). This represented about 1% of the total gainfully occupied population at the time and is equivalent to only 11% of the number of full-time farmers in the Islands, although only about half of the 840 appear to be full-time fishermen. "Many are engaged in the industry for part of the year only and they usually have an laternative occupation ashore" (B/250, p.13).

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Burdon, in his 1956 report, sums up the present condition of the fishermen : "The most remarkable feature of the industry is the diversity of methods which individual fishermen use. Some fishermen are more advanced than others, but in general they are progressive and their knowledge of the local fisheries is extensive. Unfortunately they have little contact with the world beyond Malta and do not learn of new developments in fishing technique. This is aggravated by the comparatively low standard of education" (B/250, pp.13-14). [871]

The parallel with farming and farmers in Malta is clear. Burdon observes that recent developments "make it imperative that vocational training should be given to the fishermen. This must be simple in form and should be taken to the fishermen - i.e. the classes must be held in the fishing centres at times when the fishermen are available. But such measures are unlikely to meet with success if confined to the fishermen whose livelihood depends upon fishing whenever the weather permits. Special attention must, therefore, be paid to the children of the fishermen who will become the fishermen of tomorrow" (B/250, p.14).

226 463 871 829 014

The present writer holds that the need for education in agriculture is exactly parallel to Burdon's recommendation. But, whereas a start on these lines has already been made in farming (Section 4), nothing has been done in the case of fishing, although the need for the technical education of the fisherman has been stressed since as long ago as 1931 (B/237, p.47). There are still no qualified Maltese skippers (B/250, p.14) and, for work in the more distant grounds off Lampedusa and Sicily, Italians are employed. They are regarded with some awe by local fishermen for their literacy, technical knowledge and the rather higher wages which they can command.

000 can command.

226 There has, however, been material help to fishing in the
463 form of financial assistance[31] and the introduction of a
654 Fishing Equipment Supply Service (E/177 - 1957, Section F,
178 p.1), but the essence of the problem is, as in agriculture, that there is a retreat from fishing by the younger generation.

226 Marsaxlokk is the biggest fishing centre in the Islands
103 while, in Malta itself, Żurrieq - though not a port - comes
621 second by number of resident fishermen. In Gozo most fisher-
361 men live in Victoria and Xewkija, both inland settlements away from the fishing harbours of Marsalforn, Mġarr and Xlendi. Socially this residential distribution is important since only in Marsaxlokk is there a sufficient resident fishing population for one to talk of a 'fishing community'.

361 Marsaxlokk achieved parochial status in 1897 but the
226 village is still without many 'modern' attributes such as cinema, resident doctor, barber and certain shopping facilities for which the fisherman goes to Żejtun. His interest is
[484] primarily the sea and many fishermen visit the 'town' only
[443] for the fish market. In Marsaxlokk itself the fishermen
[512] gather for Church and gossip on Sunday mornings; the rest of their weekly schedule is governed by the weather and the season.

226 As a class the fishermen and their families are economi-
463 cally lower than the farmers. In February, 1958, about
554 10.4% of the estimated 840 fishermen were poor enough to
511 qualify for C.A.R.E. relief (v. Section 3). At the same
162 time only 9% of farmers were entitled to supplies on the same basis, and the average for the total population was lower still at 8.2%.

226 The fisherman is regarded, even by the farmer, as low on
463 the social scale. This, together with the generally
554 depressed standard of living of the fishing community despite
178 the present official financial assistance, is producing exactly the same position as in agriculture. The younger generation is not prepared to accept the industry as it is nor the way of life based on it.